

Montana Consortium/ OPI

Paraprofessional Standards and Competency Checklist

Meeting the Rigorous Standard of Assessment of ESEA requirements for Paraprofessionals:

Attached is Competency/ Standards Checklist for use with paraprofessionals. This competency list is designed to assist in meeting the criteria for ESEA requirements for Paraprofessionals from the *No Child Left Behind Act*, Option 3:

Meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate through a formal state or local academic assessment: Knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and math or reading readiness, writing readiness, or math readiness.

New Paraprofessionals: This applies to paraprofessionals hired after the date of enactment of the new law, which was January 8, 2002:

- ⌘ If an applicant does not meet the requirement of 1) complete 2 years of study at institution of higher learning OR 2) obtained an associate or higher degree THEN he/ she is required to complete an academic assessment in areas of reading, writing and math.
- ⌘ Structured interview questions, as well as the results from the academic assessment, be used at the district level as an initial screening device to assess the level of competency of paraprofessionals in meeting each of the standards.
- ⌘ If the paraprofessional meets the minimum competencies of the structured interview, he/she will be hired contingent on completing an orientation and continued professional development to meet standards. The supervisor will verify those competencies that the paraprofessional meets by signing off with I (interview) and initial for each Skill or Knowledge the paraprofessional demonstrates.
- ⌘ Orientation (using the *OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals*) will be given within the first 2 weeks with an "assessment" to meet E-Entry level requirements.
- ⌘ Ongoing Professional Development is needed to assist new and existing paraprofessionals to meet the standards attached.

Existing Paraprofessionals: All existing paraprofessionals have four years to meet this requirement (by January 8, 2006):

- ⌘ The attached standards will be used as a portfolio/ competency checklist by existing paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals will keep a portfolio of information that demonstrates that the paraprofessional has met the standards. This can be demonstrated through participation in a class, interview with the paraprofessional, or demonstration by the paraprofessional of those competencies and/or portfolio.
- ⌘ Assessment of academic skills in the area of reading, writing, and math will need to be completed for those paraeducators who have not met the requirement of 1) complete 2 years of study at institution of higher learning OR 2) obtained an associate or higher degree.
- ⌘ The supervisor is responsible to verify that the paraprofessional has met the standard. Some kind of verification should be included in the paraprofessional portfolio to verify that the paraprofessional has met each standard.
- ⌘ Ongoing professional development is recommended to assist existing paraprofessionals to meet the standards attached.

Standards modified from National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services, Anna Lou Pickett & CEC Standards for Paraprofessionals

COTOP ACADEMIES: Developed by PARA2 Center at University of Colorado- Denver. Trainings are available through CSPD Regions.

ER&D: Educational Research and Dissemination program. Trainings available through MEA/MFT.

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Paraprofessional Standards and Competency Checklist

Employee Name: _____ Work Location: _____

Job Title: _____ Date Standard Achieved: _____

Achievement Level: E- Entry; I- Intermediate; A- Advanced

Verification: C- Class; I – Interview; D- Demonstration; P- Portfolio

Standard 1: To DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE IN THE AREAS OF READING, WRITING AND MATH, paraprofessional demonstrates the following knowledge and skill competencies.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge competencies</i>			
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Individual proficiency in basic reading	E		
K2 Individual proficiency in basic writing	E		
K2 Individual proficiency in basic math	E		

Assessment tools to meet this standard:

A side-by-side comparison of a variety of assessment tools is available on the CSPD website.

www.opi.state.mt.us/cspd then go to Paraprofessional resources.

Assessments MUST meet the following requirements:

- **Must be able to measure**
 - **Knowledge of and**
 - **ability to assist in instructing in areas of reading, writing, and math or readiness**
- **Need not be “paper & pencil test”**
- **Must be valid, reliable, documented**
- **Not just basic competencies**
- **Rigor: equivalent to *second year of college***

Note:

- **No state (OPI) mandated assessment.**
- **Local district decision on which academic assessment(s) to select for use with paraprofessionals**

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Standard 2: To SERVE AS MEMBERS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS, paraprofessional demonstrates the following knowledge and skill competencies.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge competencies</i>			
K1 Understand the value of team approach to the delivery of education and related services for learners and their families	E		
K2 Understand Federal, State, and district/agency policies, regulations and practices connected with paraprofessionals employment, roles, supervision and preparation	E		
K3 Understand the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/ providers, families, paraprofessionals and other team members in identifying learner needs, developing plans to meet learner needs, and implementing programs to achieve learner goals	I		
K4 Awareness of problem-solving and decision making strategies that strengthen program planning teams and program implementation teams	A		
<i>Skill Competencies</i>			
S1 Follow teacher/ provider instructions and carry out team decisions	E-I		
S2 Interact constructively with and demonstrate respect for learners, families, and other school/agency personnel	E-I		
S3 Contribute relevant objective information to teachers/ providers to facilitate planning, problem solving and decision making	I		
S4 Participate in program planning team meetings, i.e. school-wide planning meetings, school improvement plans	I		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Teamwork (K1, K3, S1, S2, S4)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Orientation to Special Education (K2)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Interpersonal Skills (K1, K4, S2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Personal Growth and Development (K4, S1, S2, S3)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1, K2, K3, K4, S1, S2, S3)**

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Standard 3: To assist teachers/ providers in MAINTAINING LEARNER- CENTERED, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, paraprofessional demonstrates the following knowledge and skills.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Awareness of basic procedures for protecting the safety, health and well-being of learners and staff	E		
K2 Awareness of laws, policies and procedures for reporting suspected physical, sexual and psychological child abuse	E		
K3 Awareness of procedures for managing behavior and disciplining all children and youth	E		
<i>Skill Competencies</i>			
S1 Implement proactive behavior and learning strategies developed by teachers/ providers that maintain supportive and inclusive learning environments	I		
S2 Follow and use prescribed district/ agency policies and procedures to ensure the safety, health, and well being of learners and staff	I		
S3 Use universal health precautions for preventing illness and infections and proper body mechanics for lifting learners and heavy objects	I		
S4 Perform emergency first aid and CPR procedures	I		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Teamwork (K3, S1)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Orientation to Special Education (K1, K2, S2, S3)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Behavior Management (K3, S1)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Strategies (S1)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Student Supervision (K1, K3, S1, S2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **First Aid/ CPR- (S4)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1, K2, S1, S2, S3, S4)**

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Standard 4: To assist teachers/ providers with PLANNING AND ORGANIZING LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ENVIRONMENTS, paraprofessional demonstrates the following knowledge and skills.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Plan for smooth transitions between activities and environments	E		
K2 Understanding the distinctions in teacher/provider and paraprofessionals roles in developing curriculum content, learning strategies, and modifying learning programs to meet the needs of individual and groups of children and youth	E		
<i>Skill Competencies</i>			
S1 Use copy machines, computers and other equipment to prepare learning materials and resources	E-I		
S2 Use adaptive equipment and assistive technology prescribed by teachers/ providers and other professional practitioners	I-A		
S3 Record relevant information about learners using graphs and charts to assist in the learning process (i.e.. reading, writing, math)	I		
S4 Assist teachers/ providers with modifying learning materials and activities to meet the needs of individuals with different ability levels, learning styles, or language backgrounds. (i.e. reading, writing, math)	I-A		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Teamwork (K2)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Technology (S1, S2, S3)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Strategies (K1, K2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Interpersonal Skills (K1, K2)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Student Supervision (K1)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1, K2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Beginning Reading Instruction (S3, S4)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Thinking Math (S3, S4)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Foundation and Effective Teaching (K1, S3)**

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Standard 5: To assist teachers/ providers in ENGAGING CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN LEARNING EXPERIENCES, paraprofessional demonstrates the following knowledge and skill competencies.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Awareness of different methods that are used by teachers/ providers to accommodate an individual’s learning needs (e.g. reading, writing and math)	E-I		
K2 Awareness of developmentally and age-appropriate reinforcement techniques to facilitate the learning of children and youth with different needs (reading, writing, math)	E-I		
<i>Skills Competencies</i>			
S1 Develop and maintain effective interaction with a wide diversity of learners	I-A		
S2 Carry out teacher/ provider-developed proactive behavioral strategies	I		
S3 Use developmentally- and age-appropriate strategies, equipment, materials and technologies as directed by teacher/ provider	I		
S4 Use teacher/ provider-developed positive behavioral and instructional strategies and procedures that facilitate the learning of children and youth with challenging behaviors and diverse learning styles	I-A		
S5 Use computers and other instructional technology in a purposeful manner to assist instruction and facilitate learning in areas of reading, writing and math	I		
S6 Use strategies as directed to facilitate effective integration into various settings (e.g. libraries, computer labs, lunchrooms, playgrounds and buses)	I		
S7 Follow and carry out teacher/provider plans for strengthening academic skills (reading, writing, math) for school-age learners	I		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Strategies (K1, K2, S1, S4, S7)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Behavior Management (S1, S2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Technology (S5)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Student Supervision (S1, S6)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1, K2, S1, S2, S3, S4)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Beginning Reading Instruction (K1, K2, S3, S5, S7)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Thinking Math I (K1, K2, S3 S7)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Foundations In Effective Learning (K1, K2, S3, S4)**

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Standard 6: To assist teachers/ providers with ASSESSING LEARNER NEEDS, PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS, paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge and skill competencies.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Awareness of different kinds of assessment based on student's needs	E		
K2 Awareness of the reasons for conducting different types of evaluations and assessments (standardized, informal, criterion-referenced) to assess learners strengths and needs in areas of reading, writing and math	I		
<i>Skill Competencies</i>			
S1 Use assessment instruments developed by teachers/ providers to document and maintain data. (reading, writing, math, behavior management programs)	I		
S2 Under the direction of teacher, assists with administration of standardized tests based on State/district/agency policies, the protocol for conducting the test, and the paraprofessional's qualifications for carrying out the task	I-A		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Technology (K1)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Orientation to Special Education (K1)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Beginning Reading Instruction (K1, S1)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Thinking Math I (K1, S1)**
- ☐ **ER&D: Foundation of Effective Teaching (K1, S1)**

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Standard 7: To MEET STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT, paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge and skill competencies.

	Achievement Level	Date Achieved	Verification/ Initials
<i>Knowledge Competencies</i>			
K1 Understanding of the civil, legal, and human rights of children, youth and their families (i.e. safe schools, confidentiality, FERPA)	E-I		
K2 Awareness of state and district standards for professional and ethical conduct for all personnel	E		
K3 Awareness of chain of command for decision making and addressing policy questions, systems issues, and personnel practices	E		
K4 Awareness of and sensitivity to diversity and individual differences among learners, their families and school/agency personnel	E-I		
<i>Skill Competencies</i>			
S1 Perform assigned tasks under the supervision of teachers/providers in a manner consistent with professional and ethical guidelines established by the State or district/agency	I		
S2 Willingness to participate in professional and career development opportunities	E		
S3 Confer with principal/evaluator or supervising teachers/providers to identify strengths and professional development needs	I-A		

Training Opportunities to meet this standard:

- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Orientation to Special Education (K1, K2, K3, K4)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Personal Growth and Development (S2, S3)**
- ☐ **COTOP ACADEMY: Instructional Teamwork (S1, S2, S3)**
- ☐ **OPI Resource Guide for Administrators, Educators and Paraprofessionals: (K1, K2, K3, K4, S1, S2, S3)**

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